



Chambers's Journal

SIXTH SERIES.

REMINISCENCES.

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V.—ALGERIA PAST AND PRESENT.

[A melancholy interest now attaches to the publication of these *Reminiscences*, Sir Lambert Playfair having died (on the 18th of February) since they began to appear in these columns. Their author took a lively interest in the appearance of these sketches of his official career, which must now be regarded as chapters in the posthumous autobiography of a distinguished administrator, diplomatist, and author.]



AFTER leaving Zanzibar I went to Algiers, where I occupied the position of Consul-General for nearly thirty years. During all this time it was my duty and my pleasure to travel over the country in every direction, and write all that I saw or did. Whatever, therefore, I may have to say now must be a twice-told tale. I will restrict myself to two articles on this most interesting country: (1) 'Algiers before and after the French Occupation,' and (2) 'Bruce in North Africa.'

It is not easy to compress the former within the limits of a magazine article, and so I am obliged to pass by the three hundred years of Roman occupation—the most prosperous epoch in the history of North Africa, known chiefly to us by its monuments; and even the African Church, whose great glory was to have contributed some shining names to the army of the martyrs, and to have produced such men as Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine, became so weakened by disturbances between opposing sects and races that it fell an easy prey to the enemies pressing the Roman Empire on every side.

If I go back as far as the fifth century at all, it is that I may tell the beautiful story of St Salsaa, which has been recently brought to light by the Bollandist Fathers of Belgium. I was the first to tell it in English, and it will bear repetition.

The small village of Tipasa, near Algiers, is full of Roman remains. The ancient city, which bore the same name, was a somewhat important commercial centre, built on elevated ground overlooking the sea, to the west of its small harbour. Christianity was introduced here at a very early period; but in the fourth and fifth centuries, though paganism had been deprived of official support, the great mass of the people still continued to adore the local deity—a bronze serpent with a golden head—a relic perhaps of the Punic worship of Eshmoun. The parents of Salsaa were pagans; but she had been baptised, and, though only fourteen years of age, was animated with the most enthusiastic faith. One day they took her, in spite of her reluctance, to a feast in honour of the Brazen Serpent. She protested fearlessly against the sacrifices and impure rites which took place; and when the spectators were sunk in drunken sleep she took the head of the serpent and cast it into the sea. She returned with the intention of throwing the body in also; but it made so much noise in falling that it awakened the sleepers, who rushed upon the girl, stoned her to death, and cast her body into the sea. The waves carried it into the adjacent harbour, close to the vessel of a certain Saturninus, which had just arrived from Gaul; a tempest suddenly arose, and Saturninus, then asleep, had a vision that if he did not give burial to a body in the sea, near his vessel, he would inevitably perish. At first he paid no attention to this warning; the gale increased; and, as all hope of safety appeared gone, he leapt into the water, and his hand was miraculously guided to the girdle of the maiden. He took the body in his arms, and rose to the surface; immediately the storm ceased. Saturninus and his companions buried it in a humble chapel near the port; the piety of the faithful converted this into a Basilica, which was enlarged at various periods. On the

floor is still seen a mosaic pavement containing an inscription in honour of the saint, in which may be read the punning sentence: '*Martyr hic est Salsa, dulcior nectare semper.*' Salsa means 'salt' as well as the saint's name. This is of great interest, as it is the only resting-place known of an African saint and martyr.

Again, I will pass over many years occupied by the Vandal invasion; the destruction of their power by the Byzantines under Belisarius, and the great Mohammedan invasion by Okba-bin-Nafa in 647, when the Christians were utterly defeated and the African Church was swept away.

About the middle of the eleventh century another Mohammedan invasion occurred. The Khalifa Mostansir let loose a horde of nomad Arabs, numbering, it is said, two hundred thousand people, who, starting from Egypt, spread over the whole of North Africa, carrying destruction and blood wherever they passed; thus laying the foundation of that state of anarchy which rendered possible the interference of the Turks. It was no brilliant and ephemeral conquest, like that of Okba; the land was overrun by a foreign people, who speedily absorbed the Berber nation or drove the remains of it into the mountains.

As early as 1390 the Barbary corsairs began to trouble the seas; but it was not till the fall of Granada that their ravages became really serious. After the death of Ferdinand of Spain in 1516, the Algerines called in the assistance of the celebrated Turkish corsair, Baba Aroodj—or Barbarossa, as he was called by Europeans—who, under the guise of an ally, made himself master of the place, and, though nominally a vassal of the Porte, really became an independent ruler. Year by year the Barbary corsairs became more audacious; they could not support themselves without roaming the seas for plunder, which they did without the least fear or apprehension, as far even as the shores of England. At other times, carrying with them renegades as guides, they deliberately landed on the coasts and islands of the Mediterranean, pillaged towns, and carried off their inhabitants to the most wretched captivity. It seems incredible at the present day that they should have been allowed the undisputed right of interfering with the commerce of the world, and enriching themselves by the ransom of the best blood of Christendom. The only explanation is that one nation found these corsairs a convenient scourge for others, and hesitated at no means to increase its own influence with them. On the other hand, it must be avowed that the Algerines were not singular in their mode of making captives. Every state in Europe held it lawful to enslave an infidel. The common law of England, as well as the Inquisition, doomed infidels to the stake. All that can be said of the Algerines is that they made the trade in Christian slaves their principal branch of commerce, and that they continued their detestable practices to a period

when they were generally reprobated by public opinion and the laws of nations. When the institution of Christian slavery was at its height there were from twenty thousand to thirty thousand captives at a time in Algiers alone, representing every nation in Europe and every rank in society, from the Viceroy to the common sailor; men of the highest eminence in the Church, literature, science, and arms; delicately-nurtured ladies and little children, doomed to spend their lives in infamy, the majority of whom never returned to their native land.

Père Dan, in his *History of Barbary*, relates the daring raid made by two pirate vessels on Baltimore in Ireland. He says:

Murat Rais, a Flemish renegade, went to Ireland, where, having landed during the night with two hundred men, he carried off two hundred and thirty-seven persons—men, women, and children, even those in the cradle. That done, he brought them to Algiers, where it was pitiable to see them exposed for sale; for then they separated wives from their husbands, and infants from their fathers. They sold the husband to one and the wife to another, tearing the daughter from her arms, without any hope of seeing her again. I heard all this at Algiers from several of the slaves, who assured me that no Christian could witness what took place without melting into tears, to see so many honest girls and so many well-brought-up women abandoned to the brutality of these barbarians.

Another very audacious capture took place off the shores of Ireland shortly after this affair—that of the Rev. Devereux Spratt, with one hundred and twenty of his countrymen. His journal is in the possession of the family of his descendant, the late Admiral Spratt, who very kindly communicated it to me. He says:

I embarked in one John Filmer's vessel with about six-score passengers; but before we were out of sight of land we were taken by an Algerine pirate, who put the men in chains and stocks. The thing was so grievous that I began to question Providence, and accused Him of injustice in His dealings with me; until the Lord made it appear otherwise by ensuing mercy. Upon my arrival in Algiers I found pious Christians, which changed my former thoughts of God, which was that He dealt more hard with me than with other of His servants. God was pleased to guide for me and those relations of mine taken with me in a providential ordering of civil patrons for us, who gave me more liberty than ordinary; especially to me, who preached the Gospel to my poor countrymen, amongst whom it pleased God to make me an instrument of much good. . . . After this God stirred up the heart of Captain Wilde to be an active instrument for me at Leagourn, in Italy, amongst the merchants there, to contribute liberally towards my ransom. Upon this a petition was presented by the English captives for my staying amongst them. It he showed me, and asked me what I should do. I told him he was an instrument under God of my liberty, and I would be at his disposing. He answered, No, I was a free man, and should be at my own disposing. Then I replied, 'I will stay,' considering that I might be more serviceable to my country by continuing to endure afflictions with the people of God than to enjoy liberty at home.

Of one episode in this wretched state of things

the English have every reason to be proud. In 1816 Lord Exmouth was sent on a mission to the Barbary States to obtain the release of a number of slaves belonging to powers in alliance with Britain. During the negotiations which followed, Lord Exmouth himself, our Consul, his wife, sister, and daughter, were treated with the utmost insult and ignominy; and when a rupture with the British fleet appeared inevitable, the Dey sent orders to Bona to arrest all Italians there under British protection. These orders were executed with the most rigorous ferocity. At least one hundred persons were murdered while attending mass, as many more were wounded, eight hundred were taken prisoners, and an indiscriminate plunder of their effects took place. To avenge this insult, Lord Exmouth was sent to Algiers with two line-of-battle ships, ten frigates, and seven vessels of smaller size. A Dutch squadron under Admiral Van Capellan co-operated with him. They arrived at Algiers on 27th August 1816, and a flag of truce was sent on shore to communicate the ultimatum of the British Government, and demand the instant liberation of our Consul, who had been imprisoned in irons. No answer was given; whereon the fleet bore up, and each vessel took up its appointed station. The English flagship, the *Queen Charlotte*, anchored half a cable's length from the Molehead. A gun was fired from the shore batteries, a second and a third followed, the remainder being drowned by the thunder of the *Queen Charlotte's* broadside. The action became general. The Dutch squadron behaved with admirable gallantry. The enemy's flotilla of gunboats advanced, when a single broadside sent thirty-three out of thirty-seven to the bottom. The whole of the Algerine frigates were burnt at their anchors and blown up, and before night the sea-defences were in ruins. On the following morning the Dey acceded to all Lord Exmouth's demands, the first of which was the abolition for ever of Christian slavery. In the British squadron one hundred and twenty-three men were killed and six hundred and ninety wounded; the Dutch had thirteen killed and fifty-two wounded. The losses of the Algerines were estimated at seven thousand. The total number of European slaves restored to liberty was three thousand and three.

In spite of this chastisement the audacity and perfidy of the Algerines continued unabated, and the most solemn treaties were regarded as so much waste-paper. The subject of the dispute which eventually caused their downfall was the claims of a Jew named Bakri, on account of stores supplied to the French Government during the Napoleonic wars. At one of the interviews which the French Consul had with the Dey, the latter struck him on the face with a fan. This conduct, for which he refused any reparation, served as an excuse to the French Government to send an expedition against Algiers; and, after a very ineffi-

cient blockade of three years, the town was taken possession of by the French, almost without a struggle, on the 6th of July 1830. France was as much surprised as the rest of the world at the result of the expedition. It was sent to avenge an insult; but no one for a moment contemplated the creation of so magnificent a colony as Algeria has since become. No provision even for the occupation of Algiers had been made; no project of organisation had been devised; all was uncertainty and disorder, and no one could foresee what the next step would be. The conquest, however, proceeded from day to day; and it was not till four years later that a royal *ordonnance* established regulations for the conduct of the public service. A dual government was devised, in which, however, the military element was supreme; and for many years this was productive of the most deplorable results.

At first the conquerors were totally ignorant of the manners and customs of the people whom they were called on to govern; great difficulties and serious mistakes were therefore inevitable. The whole country remained in the possession of a hostile people, some of whom had never been subdued since the fall of the Roman Empire, and the remainder were firmly resolved to defend their independence, newly acquired by the collapse of the Turkish power. Even when these had been reduced to submission everything had to be created, and the discordant elements which the country contained had to be united into one harmonious whole. The first part of the history of Algeria was purely military; but as security began to be established, European colonisation followed rapidly in spite of the active hostility of the Arabs, and the scarcely concealed opposition of the military *Bureaux Arabes*. The French make no empty boast when they declare that since their flag was first planted at Algiers not a day has passed without being marked by some act of progress. No element in the population has remained stationary, although they have not increased in as rapid a manner as in colonies under the British flag. The natives at the time of the conquest were calculated at two and a half millions; now they amount to more than three and a half, in spite of the terrible loss of one-sixth of the whole number during the great years of famine. The European element, which was conspicuous by its absence at first, amounted to three hundred and eleven thousand in 1879, and has now increased to five hundred and thirty-seven thousand; of these about one-half are French, the remainder are foreigners of various nationalities, principally Spanish, Italians, and Maltese, who are not looked upon with an eye of favour by the French, but who have had, and still continue to take, a very important share in the great work of transforming a savage and almost uncultivated country into one of the richest and most productive in the basin of the Mediterranean.

It would be impossible within my limits to give even a sketch of all the military operations and successive attempts at government that have been made in the past. I have given a sufficient summary of them in my *Handbook to Algeria and Tunis* (Murray). The work carried on in Algeria may be called *colonisation de luxe*. France has been transported to Africa; the country has been covered with French towns and villages. Naturalisation is thrust upon the resident foreigners; an air of permanence and solidity pervades everything; the railways are as good as the best in France; the roads cannot be surpassed; there is hardly a hydraulic work in the world more remarkable for solidity and beauty of construction than the harbour of Philippeville; and the irrigation works, though not uniformly successful, are splendid in their conception.

The growth of cereals has always been the staple industry in Algeria; but of late it has become unremunerative, and the returns both of European and native culture are very small. Even amongst Europeans agriculture is in a very elementary condition. No forage is used save what grows spontaneously; no manure, or very little, is put on the land; no cattle are kept beyond what are required for ploughing; the land is impoverished, badly kept, and full of weeds and noxious insects, which smother and devour the crops. Ninety-eight per cent. of the land sown every year is devoted to the growth of cereals, and too little of it to the rearing of cattle. The great obstacles to agriculture are the uncertainty of seasons, and the impossibility of competing with such countries as America, Russia, and India, where land is abundant and, in the last two at least, labour is cheap.

The great obstacle to commercial success in Algeria is the exaggerated protective tariff which has been introduced here, as in all French colonies. I will only take the trade between it and Great Britain as an example. In 1872 the imports into Algeria from England were twenty-three millions of francs; they gradually decreased till 1894, when they were less than ten millions. The exports to England in 1872 were twenty-four millions; in 1894 they were under fifteen millions. The trade between England and Algeria has been nearly extinguished; and, as I cannot trace in the Custom-house returns any signs of increase between France and her colony, I am forced to conclude that the protective tariff has been prejudicial to the interests of commerce in general.

One of the most important of the products of Algeria is phosphate of lime, a substance of the most vital importance to agriculture. The principal deposits occur near Tebessa, at an elevation of two thousand four hundred feet above the sea, in beds of from eight to twelve feet thick, separated from each other by layers of limestone and marl.

They consist entirely of the débris of sharks and other marine animals, in a greater or less degree of disintegration. We are all familiar with the spectacle of solar heat and light stored up for our use in coal-measures; here is something analogous—countless myriads of marine animals have lived and died in bygone ages to produce food for our generation. The exploitation of this phosphate mountain is owing to the energy and intelligence of one of our own countrymen, Mr Crookston of Glasgow; and it is being successfully carried on in spite of the protective policy of France, its intolerance of foreigners, and the hostility of the press in Algeria.

Another precious product of Algeria is its celebrated Numidian marble. The finest quarries are at Arzew, in the department of Oran. I visited them for the first time in 1880; and in one of my Consular Reports I stated:

I almost fear to say all I wish on this subject, lest I should be charged with exaggeration; but, in sober truth, during the two days I spent in examining the ground in every direction, I passed from one marvel to another, and left in amazement at the magnitude of the treasure which has lain so long, I will not say concealed, but exposed to the most superficial glance there.

I sent a slab of it to Mr Ruskin, who wrote:

I cannot enough thank you for the lovely slab which reached me yesterday. I have been meditating on it ever since. I think it is nearly the loveliest and most instructive marble I have ever seen, and, indeed, I hope to make some use of it in the interior of our museum—of the like of it I mean, for this must remain at Brantwood, whose little museum of the stones I have specially studied will, I hope, be useful after my death.

Another beautiful stone is what is generally known as Algerian onyx, found near Tlemcen; but it has been quite thrown into the shade by a recent discovery made near Constantine. This also is an alabaster. Some are almost colourless, or of a faint yellow tint, but exceedingly delicate and translucent; other varieties, finely striated, have been stained with iron, and present every colour from white to primrose, passing into pink and deep-red. The formation of this in bygone ages is the same as may be seen at present at Hammam Meskoutin. Great volumes of boiling water, highly charged with carbonate of lime, rise from the earth; and, as it cools, the carbonate is precipitated in the form of cataracts, cones, or striated bands. There are many other qualities of marble, all very beautiful and well situated for transport. Iron ore exists more or less all over the country, as do zinc, copper, and other minerals.

I have sketched very briefly the history and the modern resources of Algeria; I wish I could have given a more favourable account of its prosperity; but, as I have said, a rigidly protective policy and the intolerance of foreign enterprise have greatly retarded its advancement.

THE RED RAT'S DAUGHTER.

CHAPTER XIX.



AS soon as the mail-boat which was carrying Katherine and Madame Bernstein to the East was out of sight Browne turned to his man, who was waiting beside him, and said: 'Now, Davis, a cab, and quickly too. We must not miss that train for London whatever happens.'

As it happened, they were only just in time. He had scarcely taken his seat before the train began to move out of the station. Placing himself in a corner of the carriage, he endeavoured to interest himself in a book; but it was of no use. Though his material body was seated in the carriage being whirled away across the green plains of Southern France, his actual self was on board the great mail-boat which was cutting its way through the blue waters, carrying Katherine mile by mile farther out of his reach. Dreary indeed did Europe seem to him now. It was a little before twelve o'clock when the train left Marseilles; it was nearly four next afternoon when he sighted the waters of the Channel at Calais. Much to his astonishment and delight, Jimmy Foote met him at Dover, and travelled back to town with him. During his absence Browne had entrusted their arrangements to his care; and in consequence Jimmy carried about with him an air of business which at other times was quite unusual to him.

'I have been down to Southampton,' he reported, 'and have seen Mason. He was hard at work getting the stores aboard, and told me to tell you he will be able to sail without fail early on Monday morning. When do you think we had better go down?'

'On Sunday,' said Browne. 'We may as well get on board as soon as we can.'

Though he spoke in this casual way, he knew that in his heart he was waiting the hour of departure with an impatience that bordered almost on desperation. He longed to see the yacht's head pointed down Channel, and to know that at last she was really in pursuit of the other boat which had been granted such a lengthy start. On reaching London they drove together to Browne's house. It was Saturday evening, and there were still a hundred and one things to be settled. Upon his study-table Browne discovered upwards of fifty invitations from all sorts and conditions of people. He smiled cynically as he opened them, and when the last one had been examined, turned to Jimmy.

'Thank Heaven, I can decline these with a clear conscience,' he said. 'By the time the dates come round we shall be on the high seas, far beyond the reach of dinners, dances, and kettledrums.'

I wonder how many of these folk,' he continued, picking up one from the heap and flicking it across the table to his friend, 'would have me in their houses again if they knew what I am about to do?'

'Every one of them, my boy,' the other replied; 'from the Duchess of Matlock downwards. You might help a thousand Russian convicts to escape from Saghalien, and they will pardon you; but you are doing one other thing for which you must never hope to be forgiven.'

'And what may that be?' Browne inquired.

'Why, you are marrying Miss Petrovitch,' said Jimmy. 'If she were a famous beauty, a great heiress, or even the daughter of a peer, all would be well; but you must remember that no one knows her; that, however much you may love her, and however worthy she may be, she is nevertheless not chronicled in the *Court Guide*. To marry out of your own circle is a sin seldom forgiven, particularly when a man is a millionaire and has been the desire of every matchmaking mother for as long as you have.'

'They had better treat my wife as I wish them to, or beware of me,' said Browne angrily. 'If they treat her badly they'll find I've got claws.'

'But, my dear fellow, there you are running your head against the wall,' said Jimmy. 'I never said they *would* treat her badly. On the contrary, they will treat her wonderfully well; for, remember, she is your wife. They will accept all her invitations for dances in London, will stay with her in the country; they will yacht, hunt, fish, and shoot with you; but the mothers, who, after all is said and done, are the leaders of society, will never forget or forgive you. My dear fellow,' he continued, with the air of a man who knew his world thoroughly, which, to do him justice, he certainly did, 'you surely do not imagine for an instant that Miss Verney has forgotten that!'

'We'll leave Miss Verney out of the question, Jimmy, if you don't mind,' said Browne, with rather a different intonation.

'I thought that would make him wince,' said Jimmy to himself; and then added aloud, 'Never mind, old man; we won't pursue the subject any further. It's not a nice one, and we've plenty else to think about, have we not? Let me tell you, I am looking forward to this little business more than I have ever done to anything. The only regret I have about it is that there does not appear to be any probability of our having some fighting. I must confess I should like to have a brush with the enemy, if possible.'

'In that case we should be lost men,' Browne replied. 'No; whatever we do, we must avoid coming into actual conflict with the authorities. By the way, what about Maas?'

'I saw him this morning,' Foote replied. 'I told him what arrangements we had made, and he will meet us whenever and wherever we wish. He seemed quite elated over the prospect of the voyage, and told me he thought it awfully good of you to take him. After all, he's not a bad sort of fellow. There is only one thing I don't like about him, and that is his predilection for wishing people to think he is in a delicate state of health.'

'And you don't think he is?' said Browne.

'Of course I don't,' Jimmy replied. 'Why, only this morning I was with him more than an hour, and he didn't cough once; and yet he was continually pointing out to me that it was so necessary for his health—for his lungs, in fact—that he should go out of England at once. It is my idea that he is hypochondriacal.'

'Whatever he is, I wish to goodness he had chosen any other time for wanting to accompany us. I have a sort of notion that his presence on board will bring us bad luck.'

'Nonsense,' said his matter-of-fact friend. 'Why should it? Maas could do us no harm, even supposing he wanted to. And he's certain not to have any desire that way.'

'Well,' said Browne, 'that is what I feel, and yet I can't make out why I should do so.' As he said this he pressed the ring Katherine had given him, and remembered that that was his talisman, and that she had told him that while he wore it he could come to no harm. With that on his finger, and his love for her in his heart, it would be strange indeed if he could not fulfil the task he had set himself to do.

It is strange how ignorant we are of the doings, and indeed of the very lives, of our fellow-men. I do not mean the actions which, in the broad light of day, lie in the ordinary routine of life, but those more important circumstances which are not seen, but make up and help to weave the skein of each man's destiny. For instance, had a certain well-known official in the office of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who stood upon the platform of Waterloo Station waiting for the train that was to carry him to the residence of a friend at Woking, dreamt for an instant that the three gentlemen he nodded so affably to, and who were standing at the door of a saloon-carriage in the same train, were leaving England next day in order to cause considerable trouble to a Power that at the moment had shown signs of being friendly, what would his feelings have been? He did not know it, however; so he seated himself in his comfortable smoking-carriage, lit a cigar, and read his Sunday paper quite unconscious of the circumstances.

It was nearly eight o'clock before they reached Southampton. When they did they made their way to the harbour, where a steam-launch from the yacht was awaiting them. The *Lotus Blossom* herself lay off the Royal Pier; and when they reached her Captain Mason received them at the gangway.

'Well, Mason,' said Browne, 'is everything ready for the start to-morrow?'

'Everything is ready, sir,' Mason replied. 'You have only to say when you desire to get off, and we'll up anchor.'

Browne thought that he would like to get under way at once; but it could not be. He looked along the snow-white decks and upon the polished brasswork, and thought of the day that he had left the boat when she was anchored in the harbour of Merok, to accompany his guests on their walk to the falls, and of the wonderful things that had happened since then. Before many weeks had passed over their heads he hoped that Katherine herself would be standing on these selfsame decks. He pictured the delight he would feel in showing her over his trim and beautiful vessel, and thought of the long conversations they would have on deck at night, and of the happiness they would feel when they were speeding towards safety once more with the rescued man on board. What they were to do with her father when they had got him was one thing he wanted to leave to Katherine to decide. He was awakened from these dreams by Foote, who inquired whether he intended to allow his guests to remain on deck all night, or whether he was going to take them below.

'I beg your pardon,' said Browne. 'It's awfully rude of me to keep you standing here like this. Come along.'

They accordingly made their way down the companion-ladder to the saloon below. Everything had been prepared for their reception, and the stewards were already laying dinner as they entered. Having finished that important meal, and drunk the toast of a pleasant voyage, they ascended to the deck once more, when Foote and Maas made their way to the smoking-room, while Browne went up to the bridge to have a talk with the captain. When he descended again, he announced to his guests that the yacht would be got under way as soon as it was light in the morning, and that the first coaling-place would be Gibraltar.

'Bravo!' said Jimmy, rapping the table with his pipe. 'Thank goodness, by midday we shall be well out in the Channel.'

At the same moment Maas's cigar slipped from between his fingers and dropped on the floor. He bent down to pick it up, but at first could not find it. By the time he had done so the conversation had changed, and Browne had drawn his watch from his pocket. A cry of astonish-

ment escaped him: 'Have you any idea what the time is?'

They confessed that they had not.

'Well, it's nearly twelve o'clock,' he said. 'If you won't either of you take anything else, I think the best thing we can do is to get to bed as soon as possible.'

So tired was Browne that night that he slept without waking until well on in the following morning. Indeed, it was past nine o'clock when Davis, his man-servant, entered and woke him; he sat up, and rubbed his eyes as if he could very well have gone on sleeping for another hour or two.

'By Jove! we're under way,' he said, as if he were surprised to find the yacht moving. 'Where are we, Davis?'

'Off Swanage, sir,' the man replied. 'Captain Mason couldn't get away quite as early as he hoped to do; but he's making up for lost time now, sir.'

'What sort of a day is it?' Browne inquired.

'Beautiful, sir; it couldn't be no better if you'd ordered it special,' said Davis, who was a bit of a wag in his way, and was privileged as such. 'There's just a nice bit of swell running, but no more. Not enough to shake the curls of a schoolmistress, in a manner of speaking.'

This Browne discovered to be the case when he ascended to the deck. The yacht was bathed in sunshine, and she sat as softly as a duck upon a large green swell that was as easy as the motion of a rocking-horse. Far away to starboard the pinewood cliffs of Bournemouth could be descried; while a point on the starboard-bow was Poole Harbour and Swanage headland, with Old Harry peering up out of the sunlit waves. Browne ascended to the bridge, to find Foote and Captain Mason there. The latter touched his cap, while Foote came forward and held out his hand.

'Good-morning,' said Jimmy. 'What do you think of this, my boy? Isn't it better than London? Doesn't it make you feel it's worth something to be alive? I wouldn't change places this morning with any man in England.'

'And you may be very sure I would not,' said Browne; then, turning to the skipper, he inquired what the yacht was doing.

'Thirteen knots good, sir,' the latter replied. 'We shall do better, however, when we've put Portland Bill behind us.'

As he spoke the breakfast-bell sounded, and simultaneously with it Maas appeared on deck. Browne and Foote descended from the bridge to greet him, and found him in excellent spirits.

'I feel better already,' he said as they went down the companion-ladder and took their places at the table. 'How beautiful the air is on deck! Alchemists may say what they please, but this is the Elixir of Life. What a pity it is we cannot bottle it, and introduce it into the

crowded ballrooms and dining-rooms during the London season!'

'That's rather an original notion,' said Jimmy.

'Fancy, after a waltz with a heavy partner, taking her off to a room set apart for the purpose, seating her in a chair, and, instead of asking her the usual insipid question whether she would have an ice, or coffee, or claret cup, inquiring what brand of air she preferred—whether she would have a gallon of Bournemouth, which is relaxing, or Margate, which is bracing, or Folkestone—shall we say?—which is midway between the two. It could be laid on in town and country houses, and, combined with the phonograph, which would repeat the nigger minstrel melodies of the sands, and the biograph, which would show the surrounding scenery, would be a tremendous attraction. Having purchased one of these machines, paterfamilias need not trouble his head about taking his family away for the annual trip to the seaside. Rents would not affect him; he would be free of landladies' overcharges. All he would have to do would be to take his wife and bairns into a room, turn on the various machines, and science would do the rest.'

'Perhaps, when you have done talking nonsense,' said Browne, 'you will be kind enough to hand me the *pâté de foie gras*. I remember so many of your wonderful schemes, Jimmy, that I begin to think I know them all by heart.'

'In that case you must admit that the majority of them were based upon very sound principles,' said Jimmy. 'I remember there was one that might have made a fortune for anybody. It was to be a matrimonial registry for the upper ten, where intending Benedicts could apply for particulars respecting their future wives. For instance, the Duke of A., being very desirous of marrying, and being also notoriously impecunious, would call at the office and ask for a choice of American heiresses possessing between five and ten millions. Photographs having been submitted to him, and a guarantee as to the money given to him, meetings between the parties could be arranged by the company, and a small commission charged when the marriage was duly solemnised. Then there was another scheme for educating the sons of millionaires in the brands of cigars they should give their friends. For a small commission, Viscount B., who has smoked himself into the bankruptcy court, would call at their residences three times a week, when he would not only show them how to discriminate between a Trichinopoli and a Burma Pwé, which is difficult to the uninitiated, but also between La Intimidación Excelsos of '94 and Henry Clay Sobranos, which is much more so.'

'I remember yet another scheme,' said Maas quietly as he helped himself to some caviare from a dish before him. 'You told me once of a scheme you were perfecting for forming a

company to help long-sentenced burglars of proved ability to escape from penal servitude, in order that they should work for the society on the co-operative principle. If my memory serves me, it was to be a most remunerative

speculation. The only flaw in it that I could see was the difficulty in arranging the convict's escape, and the danger that would accrue to those helping him in case they were discovered.'

THE WEST INDIES PAST AND PRESENT.

By E. D. BELL.



It has been said that the land is happy which has no history; and if this can be accepted as the ideal, the reverse would no doubt be found in lands which not only have a history, but a history

whose principal incidents are of fire and flood, earthquake devastation, pestilence, and economic disaster. Such lands are our British West Indian islands, and we purpose sketching briefly the series of events which, in the present century, have reduced them to their deplorable condition.

'Their deplorable condition.' To one acquainted with them there is something strangely unreal in the thought that lands so richly blest in climate, soil, and geographical position should be in such a condition. Indeed, their state is, perhaps, the saddest irony to be found in contemporary political economy. Take the island of Jamaica, for example. Her name is derived from the Indian word *zaymaka*, meaning water and wood, in obvious reference to her grand fertility. She has an area of four thousand one hundred and ninety-three square miles, of which only about six hundred and forty-six are flat, and form a fringe along the seashore surrounding the mountainous interior of from three thousand five hundred to three thousand six hundred square miles. These mountains rise to a height of seven thousand three hundred and sixty feet, and afford every possibility of tropical and semi-tropical climate. The superb nature of the soil, watered by more than two hundred rivers, is such that she produces a larger number of products of the highest quality than any equal area known. Her rum fetches a price from forty to a hundred per cent. higher than any other; her pimento monopolises the market; her fruit—particularly the bananas, pine-apples, and oranges—are admitted by travellers to be a revelation to those who are only acquainted with the productions grown elsewhere. Coffee from her Blue Mountains commands a higher price than the far-famed Mocha, which most persons erroneously consider the finest—an idea due to the fact that our best coffee is only grown in small quantity and rarely appears on the market. Her ginger is universally acknowledged to be the best; and although sarsaparilla no longer holds the position it once had in the pharmacopœia, the Jamaican variety is the only

one the physician cares to dispense. And yet, with all the advantages of the soil which grows these things, what is the history of her agricultural and commercial development during the present century? Its unfortunate nature may be shown in a single sentence: whereas the average yearly exports of the three great staples—sugar, coffee, and rum—for the five years 1802 to 1807 were valued at £3,852,621, for the three years 1894 to 1896 the average was only £636,380, or less than one-sixth of what they were ninety years ago.

The first blow was struck at the prosperity of the British West Indies when, in 1807, the slave-trade was suppressed. This was certainly a righteous thing, and, in the moral development of the nation, it was, like the later abolition of slavery, an inevitable thing. But we are here concerned with its economic results rather than with its ethical justification. By closing the slave-market it made labour more difficult to obtain and more expensive; and a progressive shrinkage in cultivation and production began. Still using Jamaica as our example, we find that in the five years 1828 to 1833—the last year before the commencement of the abolition—the average yearly value of the three staples had fallen to £2,791,478. This was a considerable loss, amounting to £1,061,143, or twenty-eight per cent. on the exports of 1802 to 1807. Nor did the damage end there. Large numbers of the estates could only continue working by becoming heavily mortgaged, and thus prepared the way for their final ruin at a later time. While the planters were struggling with these difficulties the great blow of the abolition fell upon them. From the 1st of August 1834 the slaves were to be free; but they were to remain attached to the estates as apprentices for six years. Owing, however, to a strong agitation in England for the early completion of emancipation, apprenticeship was terminated on the 1st of August 1838, and the planters were thus deprived of two years of the free labour promised them in part compensation. The effects very rapidly developed themselves. In 1834 the exports of the staples were £2,501,000; in 1839, the first year of complete freedom, they fell to less than a million, to £994,899—a decrease of more than sixty per cent. in five years. Large numbers of the manumitted people became independent settlers, especi-

ally in those colonies which, like Jamaica, had a considerable amount of unoccupied or abandoned land. Not only did labour thus become more expensive, but in many cases it was impossible to obtain it in such quantities as would enable the agricultural system to be maintained. A case may be quoted in illustration. On certain estates in Jamaica there were in 1832 just under forty-two thousand slaves; in 1847, fifteen years after, only about fourteen thousand labourers, or about one-third the number needed, could be got to work on them, the remainder having gone off to live the lives of ease so readily attained on the prodigal soil of the country. Under these circumstances the shrinkage of cultivation was inevitable; and it is not surprising to read that within those fifteen years one hundred and sixty-eight thousand acres of cane and one hundred and eighty-eight thousand acres of coffee were abandoned by the despairing planters. And their condition was truly desperate. The British Government had paid them £5,853,975 in compensation; but, as their slave-property was worth more than this, they were brought face to face with a great financial loss at the very moment when additional burdens were being placed upon them for the payment of labour; while in many cases the mortgagees, feeling uncertain as to how the colonies would progress under the altered condition of things, foreclosed, and large sums of money were thus diverted from the planters, who never had even the opportunity given them of attempting to retrieve their ruin.

It has already been admitted that the abolition of slavery was a righteous thing; but it is permissible to believe that even righteous things may be performed in an unrighteous or at least in an inexpedient manner. Most persons are familiar with the views put forward by Wilberforce and the noble band of associates who, with him, led the agitation which culminated in the abolition, and there is no need to detail them here; but it may have the interest, at least, of novelty to many to know how the matter would be regarded, especially in the light of post-abolitional history, by any enlightened representative of the planting interest in the West Indies to-day. When the English sent an army across the Border to compel the Scotch to let their young princess, Mary Stuart, marry Edward VI., the Earl of Huntly remarked that he disliked not the match, but he hated the manner of wooing. Any enlightened planter of to-day would acknowledge that the abolition was right; but he would almost certainly hold that the method was unfortunate. Consider what it was that took place. Practically the whole of the peasantry and nearly the whole of the artisan class were enslaved; and these people, constituting the great bulk of the population, on a single night passed from the discipline of slavery to the independent condition of the free labourer, and the whole

economic and industrial system of the colonies was destroyed in an hour. It is, indeed, very difficult to realise the immensity of the revolution. If, by the passing of an impossible law, it were decreed that every employer of labour in Britain should continue to pay his workmen the wages he is now paying, and, in addition, give them fifty per cent. of the profits of their labour, it would be a vast change, but it would, perhaps, scarcely equal that of which we are speaking. No; what should have been done was this: it should have been decreed that after a certain day all children born of slaves should be free, and that on another day, thirty to forty years from the first, all slaves still living should be declared free. By this means a generation of free-men would have grown up amid the slave population, and as these died off would have taken their places without difficulty or confusion. They would have been born and reared on the estates, and the idea of remaining to labour on them among their own people would have suggested itself instinctively. Had some such method as this been adopted, the long agony of the last two generations might have been saved to the West Indies.

But to return. A small remnant of the planters still endeavoured to work their estates under the changed condition of things. It is possible that in time they might have succeeded in regaining something like their old position, protected as their sugar was in the British market. But fate was not yet done with them. In 1846 free-trade was proclaimed. Just before this decision was made Spain had determined to abolish slavery in her West Indian possessions; but no sooner was it made known that England had declared for free-trade than the purpose was withdrawn, and the bells of Havana are said to have been rung for joy at the prospect of competing with slave-grown sugar against the sugar of the British West Indies. It is a strange illustration of how, in the complexity of the forces which mould the social development of man, results are achieved which are not only unforeseen, but irremediably opposed to our purposes and sentiments. The apostles of free-trade were, doubtless, as excellent humanitarians as any in England; but they unwittingly riveted the chains of the Spanish slaves for forty years, and doomed hundreds of thousands to the continuance of a fate compared with which that of the British slave was a benignant one.

The effects of free-trade were felt immediately. In 1847 the planters of Jamaica petitioned the British Government, and pointed out that, whereas the actual cost of manufacturing a hundredweight of sugar in the colony was twenty-two shillings and sevenpence halfpenny, by competition with the slave-grown sugar of Cuba they were compelled to sell at fifteen shillings, or two-thirds the bare cost of production, apart from any ques-

tion of profit. They implored the Government to impose protective duties, to which request an inflexible *non possumus* was the reply. The state of affairs became still worse; estates continued to be abandoned, and the exports of the staples to decrease until, in 1856, they touched the lowest point to which they had hitherto fallen—£563,500, or about fifteen per cent. of what they were fifty years before. The total exports of the products of the cane for the three years 1854 to 1856 for the three principal sugar islands, Barbadoes, Jamaica, and Trinidad, and the mainland settlement of British Guiana, averaged about £3,110,000; and it is important to note, as showing the place of the sugar-cane in the life of these colonies, that even in the decayed state of the cultivation as it then existed they amounted to more than eighty per cent. of the total value of the exports. After this, however, a slight improvement was noticeable, and in the three years 1864 to 1866 the average rose to £3,583,000, in round numbers, and it began to appear as if the worst were past. This was owing to the fact that the remarkable incapacity for government which characterises the modern Spaniard was steadily disintegrating the commercial system of Cuba; and as that declined, so the British West Indies prospered. In 1868 the smouldering discontent of the Cubans broke out into the revolt which, after lasting for thirty years, has recently ended in the destruction of Spanish dominion. The British colonies reaped the benefits of this disorder, and in 1874 to 1876 their exports of the cane products rose, on the average, to £4,438,000. Other influences were, in the meantime, operating in such a manner as to assist this development. The generation of freedmen who had left the estates on the abolition was dying off, and their children were returning to regular labour. In this they were assisted by the pressure very properly put upon them by the Government in expelling them from abandoned estates upon which they had 'squatted.' The anger of a section of these 'squatters' because they were disturbed in their illegal possession was a chief cause of the Jamaica rebellion of 1865.

From 1880 to 1884 our colonies, although producing quantities far beneath what they had done in the palmy days when the century was young, were moving strongly on the upward path, and hopes began to be entertained that the cloud had passed for good. But the planter was reckoning without the bounty system. He had fought out one of the finest economic struggles of the century. Staggered by the suppression of the slave-trade in 1807, he had been all but completely overthrown by the abolition in 1838. As soon as he began making a few tentative movements for the recovery of some portion of his lost ground he was crippled by the proclamation of free-trade, and compelled to compete

with paid-labour sugar against the slave-grown sugar of the Spanish colonies. He fought out that battle, and he won it; and now, when he might fairly have hoped that the field was clear, the spectre of the bounty system rose before him. The manner of its development was peculiar, and serves as another illustration of the growth of unforeseen results in social adjustments.

In the bounty countries a tax was imposed on all sugar manufactured, on the supposition that it was intended for home consumption; if, however, the sugar were exported, the tax was refunded. Now, taking Germany for our example, this tax was levied on the assumption that the beet would yield eight per cent. of sugar; and so long as this was approximately right there was no difficulty. But, owing to improvements in the cultivation of beetroot, the percentage of sugar which it yielded began about the middle of the century to increase, and by 1880 it had risen to about eleven per cent., while the tax still remained at eight per cent. Now, suppose a certain manufacturer worked with eleven per cent. beet to the amount of ten thousand tons, he would obtain eleven hundred tons of sugar; but under the eight per cent. tax he would pay on only eight hundred tons. If he now exported the sugar the tax would be returned him, not merely on the eight hundred he had paid for, but on the total quantity exported. If he exported the eleven hundred tons, he would thus get back the tax on the eight hundred tons, and, in addition, a sum equivalent to what he should have paid on the extra three hundred. It is this which constitutes the bounty—so much clear money which goes into the pocket of the manufacturer literally for nothing. It amounts at present to about £4 a ton on the average; and it obviously gives him an immense advantage over his cane-sugar rival, since it enables him to sell at a price which, otherwise, would never pay him. Indeed, cane-sugar can really be manufactured, and is manufactured, at a cheaper rate than beet-sugar, and would, on this ground alone, drive the latter from the market could it meet it on equal terms. Furthermore, in sweetness and in flavour it is distinctly superior to the other, as can easily be proved by dissolving equal quantities of the two in equal quantities of water, and tasting the solutions. So that the bounty system is practically a system by which a substance of expensive manufacture and inferior quality is enabled to crush out a substance of cheap manufacture and superior quality. It would be difficult to improve upon the economic irony of this position.

We have seen that for the three years 1874 to 1876 the exports of cane-products averaged £4,438,000. For the three years 1884 to 1886, under the increasing pressure of the bounty system, they fell to £3,771,000, and in 1894 to 1896 there was a still greater fall to £2,870,000.

They are still falling rapidly; and if the present state of things continues, the practical extinction of cane cultivation in these colonies can only be a question of a decade or two. Recently the planters, who for many years have been making efforts to get the British Government to impose countervailing duties on the bounty sugar, renewed their attempts, and they resulted in our Government inviting the countries principally concerned in the maintenance of the system to a discussion of the whole subject. The conference, however, came to nothing. The principal bounty-giving countries—Germany, Austria, and Belgium—were willing to abrogate the system if France agreed; but France will only agree if the British Government will threaten countervailing duties. This, unfortunately, the British Government does not see its way to do, since such a line of conduct would be a violation of the accepted economic policy of free-trade. As far, therefore, as the abolition of the system is concerned, the planters stand precisely where they stood before.

In other directions suggestions are being made and plans worked out for ameliorating the distress of the colonies, but none of them gives the promise of rapid and complete relief which would be achieved by the subversion of the bounty system. It has been proposed, for example, that the colonies should be separated from England and united with the States. This, from a purely economic standpoint, would be the very best thing that could occur for them, since the United States is not only their natural market, with which they carry on about half their trade, but the States would have no hesitation in applying, for their benefit, the protective measures of which they are so much in need. There is no likelihood, however, of this occurring, as the strong attachment of the colonists to the British connection would form an insuperable bar. When it was suggested some months ago in Jamaica the proposal simply withered away before the calm disdain of the people, as any one acquainted with them might have foreseen. Another idea put forward has been the incorporation of the islands with the Dominion of Canada. The Canadians themselves have for many years been urging this upon us; but so long as the great tariff war was going on between Canada and the States it was not worth our while to enter into a compact which would have cost us our best customer, and one whom Canada is not yet sufficiently developed to be capable of replacing. Now that there is some prospect of a reciprocity treaty being drawn up between them, the idea may be said to pass into the region of practical politics; and it may be added that the imperial spirit, of which Canada has given so many striking proofs, would make union with her very grateful to the vast majority of West Indians, apart from questions of economy. The British Government, also, has at

last taken up the matter seriously, and has voted sums of money for the relief of planters in St Vincent and elsewhere whose plantations were destroyed by the recent storm; and although the sums are inadequate, they indicate a recognition of responsibility; while it is intended to subsidise a line of fast steamers between the colonies and Britain to aid in the development of the fruit-trade. This will be valuable, as affording a new outlet for capital, though it cannot directly assist the man whose capital is already sunk in a sugar plantation. Of the scheme associated with the name of a prominent merchant, to start a great sugar-refinery in Barbadoes, it can only be said that its efficacy, supposing it to be effective at all, could only exist so long as the bounty countries did not raise their bounties. The destruction of the bounty system, either by the withdrawal of the bounties or the imposition of countervailing duties, is the only certain method of saving the sugar industry of the British West Indies; any other device can, at the best, but retard a disaster which it cannot avert.

Yet, despite the uncertainty of the outlook, no one acquainted with these colonies can easily bring himself to believe that their future is dark. The Greek of Byron tells us that—

Standing on the Persian's grave,
I could not deem myself a slave;

and the Jamaican, for example, who has stood upon the Blue Mountains and beheld the luxuriant wealth and beauty which surround him on every side finds it difficult to realise that he is a native of a community whose history is written in misfortune. We believe, no less than we hope, that the cloud which has so long overshadowed them will pass away; that their great possibilities of soil and climate will successfully assert themselves; and that their inhabitants will yet hold a place of happy achievement in the economic system of the world.

[We append a note which contains an enlightened opinion from a man on the spot. The *Times'* Correspondent at Kingston has pointed out that the negroes are practically in possession of the West Indies, and upon them is rapidly devolving the entire burden of upkeep. Of the 90,667 properties in Jamaica, 70,740 are small holdings, not exceeding five acres in extent. Of the 108,795 taxpayers, 78,991 pay amounts under £1, and 15,734 amounts under £2; which shows that the small holder is paramount. The negroes however, it is pointed out, will not become a self-supporting race until they learn the fundamental virtues of self-help, thrift, and continuous and intelligent industry. Meanwhile, the recent recommendations of the Royal Commission are being carried out, the cardinal policy being to prevent the abandonment of a single acre of cane, and further to simplify methods and cheapen the production of sugar.]

THE MAKING OF A MAN.

CHAPTER II.—DICK GETS A CHANCE.

WHAT are you going to do with the lad?' asked Macdonald the next morning as he stood, riding-whip in hand, chatting to his hostess before starting for his own place, some twelve miles distant.

'I am sure I don't know,' answered Hardie. 'He looks a duffer. They seek work, the idiots, and don't know what work is. I had rather any day have the rawest *gaucho* to deal with; they do what they are told, and ask no questions. Look at Tod—the prig that he is—only fit to twang a banjo; even that he can't do well. He turns my hair gray.'

'Give him time; give him time. He is new out of the nursery,' said Macdonald cheerily.

'What possessed the lad to come here? I must send him packing. I can't have loafers about.'

'Wait a day or two,' his wife said earnestly. 'He looks so ill and depressed; and he is a gentleman. Can't you give him a chance?'

'Because he is ill, and depressed, and a gentleman—three remarkably good reasons.' Both men laughed heartily.

'Well,' she continued, laughing in her turn, but not to be silenced, 'he is a gentleman. And I know that is no reason; but it is a reason for treating him with a little consideration.'

'I know his people,' added Macdonald. 'What would they say if they saw him now? They are the smart society sort. I suppose they had no money to start the lad in the old country.'

'I guess the style,' growled Hardie. 'The boy is shipped off to go to the bad if he chooses, and generally he does choose pretty quick, while the money that might have started him is spent on folly.'

'If you can't keep him, send him on to me,' said Macdonald. 'I must try and keep him out of mischief for old Ted's sake, and for the credit of the old school. In this hole of a country it is hard enough for a lad to run straight if left to himself.'

Mrs Hardie beamed on him without saying a word. She knew that silence is at times more persuasive than speech.

Her husband paced up and down the corridor, thinking out some project, she guessed by his set mouth and knitted forehead. He stopped in front of her, and said, 'Well, wife, to please you I will put this fine gentleman you have discovered in charge of El Plato.'

Both his listeners exclaimed in astonishment, El Plato being an *estancia* he had newly rented. In native hands it had been utterly neglected, and required to be organised afresh and put into working order.

'I must have a white man there.'

'Don't put him in to please me,' cried out his wife.

'Pastor is a rogue; none worse,' Hardie went on to say; 'but he is too useful to part with yet awhile. They say in the kitchen Milner can talk Spanish fairly well; he can't be an utter ass. I can spare no one else at present to keep an eye on Pastor, so I shall tell him he can have the berth or clear out.'

'Well, it is a chance for the lad,' said Macdonald thoughtfully. 'I wish he may do you credit, Mrs Hardie.'

'Oh, I know how it will be,' she answered, with a smile. 'If he is a failure I am scoffed at; if he is a success, Jim takes the credit of having discovered him.'

'No, no!' Hardie declared. 'He is your choice, for better or for worse.—Come along, Macdonald, and let us tackle the lad.'

They walked off to the *palenque*, where Dick stood by himself, after having seen the other young fellows ride off to work. After a few questions, Hardie, to Dick's surprise and great satisfaction, offered him the position of *mayordomo* at El Plato.

'You are young for that sort of work; but if you care to take it on trial, it will suit me to put you in. I want some one I can trust there to look after the place—see that the men do not idle or neglect the stock. The native in charge knows his work and is a capable man; all he wants is a white man over him, to keep him straight. I am over most days, so you won't be left quite to yourself. Take it or leave it; but make up your mind before night.'

'All right, sir,' answered Dick. 'I don't require to think about it. I'll take it, and be glad of a chance'—

'Good!' Both men were pleased at the lad's quick decision.

'We will ride over this afternoon and settle you there,' added Hardie.

Dick could not realise his good fortune, and, whistling gaily, set to work saddling his horse. He held up his head and did not hesitate to talk freely when spoken to. Hardie saw the change and was satisfied. 'He has some grit in him after all. The wife is right, as usual, I believe.'

It was an hour's ride from Las Tres Aromas to El Plato. As they galloped along Dick learnt that it was a very different place from the *estancia* made by Hardie himself, and run on modern theories. El Plato was a native *ranch*o standing in the open camp, and stocked by *criollo* (country-bred) cattle. In spite of the poor account he got of the place, and the anything but

pleasing portrait of Don Pastor, the *capataz* in charge, Dick felt only delight in entering into his new duties.

Dick was no coward, and had knocked about amongst rough characters and desperadoes of many nationalities since he landed in the New World, so was not much troubled by this Don Pastor, whom Hardie described as the biggest villain in the *partido*.

'I see you have a revolver. Can you use it?' he asked.

'Well, I believe it is not loaded,' confessed Dick. 'I have never had to use it; but it is as well to make a show of having one.'

'I am with you there,' replied his companion; 'it is a mere farce carrying arms about here. But you are alone with rather a reckless set of men at El Plato. Keep your shooter loaded, and let them know it. Nothing like letting them see you are prepared for them,' he added somewhat grimly.

That evening, as Dick watched his new master ride away, he felt that a loaded revolver was the best friend he had by him, for the *capataz* and his men did look a ruffianly lot.

CHAPTER III.

I am monarch of all I survey;
My right there is none to dispute.

EARLY the next morning Dick stood at the open door of his house, full of self-importance and satisfaction. He could not flatter himself that it was his own merit or his deserts that saw him *mayordomo* of the *estancia* of El Plato. He did not try to overlook the fact that he was very incapable of filling the position; he clearly understood that he had been chosen only because he had happened to be on the spot, and because Don Diego had no time at present to attend to his new acquisition, and therefore was not very particular as to who was put in charge. Yet he had a great ambition to succeed. For some minutes he stood there, heedless of the bitter cold of early dawn, keen hunger, and the remembrance of a horrible night. The two-roomed mud-hut representing the mansion-house of the estate had fallen into the possession of a horde of rats and numerous insects, less alarming, perhaps, but capable in a quieter way of causing as much annoyance.

It was midwinter. The sun had sprung up, as he watched, into a dome of brightest blue. The air, sharp, clear, and dry, was as exhilarating as a plunge into a sea of clear, cold water. Such a morning filled one with confidence and sent all doubts flying away. Before him lay the small round pond that gave the place the name of 'The Plate.' With its clean-cut margin, unbroken by stone or brushwood, and reflecting with metallic lustre the white light of the morning, it

certainly was suggestive of a tin plate cast on the greensward. A few tumble-down buildings grouped round a *patio*, with a draw-well in the centre, a *corral* enclosed with a fence of rough posts supporting wires not one of which was drawn taut, overshadowed by a fair-sized willow-tree, now almost leafless, comprised his kingdom. Two rough-looking men, a young woman, and a baby made up the sum-total of his subjects.

Having made a survey, he turned his thoughts to the work of the day. First he must have breakfast. In his zeal, the night before, he had assured Hardie that anything would do for him; he would take the food the *peones* prepared for themselves. Nothing need be specially cooked for him.

'Yes,' Hardie had answered; 'feed with them, gossip with them, be their very good friend, and then expect them to take orders from you.'

'I see,' cried Dick hastily; 'it will be better to get the woman to cook and wait on me.'

'Arrange it as you will,' was the reply. 'Only be sure that you live like a white man.'

Dick had all his life been satisfied to live as his parents or schoolmasters arranged things for him; more recently, as the man he worked for ordered. Now he must be the one to plan and make laws for others to obey. Shouting to Don Pastor to come and speak to him, he, in as masterful a voice as he could assume, gave his orders, and explained that he intended that day to ride round the fences and inspect the wells. This was not a very easy task in a language far from familiar, and to a man much older than himself, and of a very formidable appearance. All went well. To his satisfaction, the man carried out his orders promptly and pleasantly. Don Pastor had, however, his own ideas.

'What does Don Diego mean,' said he to José, his fellow-*peon*, 'by sending a white-faced little boy to boss a man like me?'

José had a very wholesome fear of his patron, and was somewhat sick of hearing Pastor swearing at him and all other Englishmen, and answered, 'Don Diego is no ass; he always gets what he wants. He gives one man work, and orders another to go, without two words about it. No, no, *amigo*' (friend); 'there must be something in the lad, or he would not be sent here to suck *maté*, and sleep, and watch what is done.'

'*Bueno* [good]. He can wait. He gives his orders now; but soon he will take them. A soft-headed *gringo*, like Panchito; we will soon show him who is the best man here.'

Panchito, which may be translated into Frankie, was the lad Dick had seen at Las Tres Aromas playing the banjo and talking the worst of Spanish. The boy prided himself on being the familiar friend of the *peones*, who treated him with kindly contempt, openly disobeying his orders when no other Englishman was present, and easily learning from him all they wished to know of the patron's private affairs.

Following this first successful day, a week or two passed fairly well. The *peones* did their work with the usual good-humour and courtesy of the *gaucho*. This good-humour, it is true, was rather forced on Pastor's part; for he adopted it to encourage his youthful master to drop into familiar ways, hoping in course of time to make him his tool. Dick, however, in fear of Jim Hardie, stood very much on his dignity. He talked little with the men, except when they worked together, and spent his few spare hours of leisure in his own quarters. He found great interest in putting the place in order, and, after he had done that, in making what improvements he could. Hardie in every way encouraged him, letting him fetch materials and borrow tools from the larger *estancia*. A clever little terrier helped him to wage war against the rats; a course of hard scrubbing and a thorough cleansing in time freed the house from other pests. With his first month's pay he bought some gaily-striped *ponchos* to cover his bed and serve as rugs on the uneven floor. With the help of fresh paint, and a few pictures stuck on the walls, the room began to look less dreary; at the best it was inferior in every way to a labourer's cottage in England.

Many long, weary evenings were spent by Dick fighting against loneliness and depression. Happily for him, Mrs Hardie discovered that he was fond of books, and never let him say good-bye to her without inquiring if he had anything to read; she would lead him to the bookshelf and help him to choose something entertaining. On cold nights he would go to bed early, wrapped in every warm garment he possessed, with a candlestick of his own designing stuck in the wall above his head. With the heroes and heroines of fiction he spent many delightful hours. Sometimes he would fall asleep, to wake with a start when his book dropped from his hand with a thud on the floor, recalled from dreams of scenes more familiar than that bare, gloomy room. The moon shone coldly through the chinks of the corrugated iron roof; out in the night the owls and strange birds cried eerily, or the wind in wild fury swept across the plain. Then he would put his arm round the faithful Jerry, and delight to feel the dog's friendly nose on his cheek; forgetting his loneliness, he would soon be sound asleep, and waken in the best of spirits to the cheerful morning and the duties of the day.

ART AND LITERATURE IN THE SCHOOLROOM.



MR TOMLINSON, in his useful guide to Northumberland, tells us that a sweeter village than Ford could hardly be imagined outside of Arcadia; and most visitors will be inclined to agree with him. After the eye has taken in the vast outline of Ford Castle—where James IV. slept ere the ill-fated battle of Flodden, which took place on an adjoining ridge of the Cheviots—and sufficiently admired the trim and cosy red-tiled cottages, with their equally trim gardens, and the ornate fountain to the memory of the Marquis of Waterford, most likely the visitor will enter the village schoolroom. No one visiting Ford should go without viewing the interior walls, which have been beautifully decorated with water-colour paintings from the brush of Lady Waterford, in illustration of the lives of good children. This talented and benevolent lady passed away on 12th May 1891, in her seventy-third year, beloved by all; and the fragrance of her memory and good deeds will long linger in Ford, where her grave is adorned by a fine marble cross by G. F. Watts, who also painted her portrait.

Lady Waterford spent the leisure of twenty-two years in adorning the walls of Ford Schoolhouse with pictures of children, drawn from the Bible. The subjects range from Cain and Abel to St Paul and St John; the last picture, 'Saul at the Feet of Gamaliel,' being finished in 1883. With a genuine love for children, she showed a happy

genius in transferring the countenances of those around her to canvas; and even one of her own servants and the schoolmaster helped as models. One of her secular pictures, of which over three hundred were exhibited in London in 1892, was entitled 'The Sixth Standard.' Another of her pictures on exhibition at a different time being simply signed L. Waterford, a critic asked, 'Who is Mr Waterford, this new genius, reviving the glories of the Venetian school?'

Mr Holman Hunt has regretted that these pictures in Ford Schoolroom have been done in such perishable materials. The last time we saw them we fancied they were getting somewhat dingy. They were painted in water-colours, on prepared paper laid on canvas and stretched on frames, and executed in her ladyship's studio at the Castle. The same artist acknowledges that 'her art came from the exercise of a very beautiful mind, and from a very diligently—although somewhat unmethodically—trained faculty for design, her taste for colour being also both remarkable by natural endowment and by cultivation.' It was natural that, although Lady Waterford had practically retired from what is known as society after the sudden death of her husband in the hunting-field in 1859, the fame of the place and the attraction of this gifted lady should have drawn visitors and friends from far and near. The visitors' book kept at the schoolhouse has a record of many notabilities, including the

names of Mr Gladstone, Sir Edwin Landseer, Earl Grey, the Earl of Shrewsbury, the Duke of Buccleuch, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, the Duchess of Teck, the Queen of the Netherlands (once a guest at the Castle), &c.

The third Marquis of Waterford first met Louisa Ann, daughter of Lord Stuart de Rothesay, at the Eglinton Tournament, where only the fact that she was an unmarried lady prevented her being crowned the Queen of Beauty. Eighteen years of happy wedded life came suddenly to an end by the accident to the Marquis; and ever afterwards, until her death, her hand and heart were occupied in philanthropic works; and what needlework is to many a lady, reading and painting were to Lady Waterford. She visited the sick and poor in all weathers, ministered to their temporal and spiritual necessities, and held mothers' meetings and Sunday and week-day classes. For more than thirty years she visited regularly a poor woman, long an invalid. Mr Neville has given a record of her activities and artistic work at Ford in his *Under a Border Tower*; while Mr Hare has a fuller biography in his *Two Noble Lives*.

The rector of Ford remarked at the opening of the schoolhouse that 'great stress is laid in the new rules of the Committee of Council on Education on reading, writing, and arithmetic in the instruction of our schools. They think that these are the branches of education most necessary for those who have to work for their living. They are indeed very necessary for making our way in the world; but they are not all or the chief things.' He then pointed to the illuminated examples of goodness enshrined in beautiful forms upon the walls, ever afterwards to be a source of inspiration to the children, and destined to be indelibly fixed in their memories. Many of the children passing through this school have done well in life in every way, and those who when children were models to Lady Waterford, men and women grown, are scattered to various parts of the world. What Lady Waterford did for Ford Schoolroom has been done for several buildings in Edinburgh by Mrs Traquair, notably for the Song-school of St Mary's Cathedral.

We do not know whether John Ruskin ever saw the pictures in Ford Schoolroom; but what Lady Waterford carried out with refined taste and nobility of purpose was publicly suggested by the great art-critic about 1883, in connection with a society of which he was president, Mr Matthew Arnold and Lord Leighton being also members. The object of the society was 'to bring within the reach of boys and girls in our Board and other schools such a measure of art-culture as is compatible with their age and studies.' A catalogue was suggested, with lists of prints, photographs, and etchings which the society was prepared to bring under the notice of schools, as well as a model collection of pictures of simple natural objects, such as birds and their nests, trees, and

scenes of rural life, of heroic adventure and historic interest. Thus the town child, with fewer opportunities than country-bred children, was to be made familiar with the common objects of the country.

This society is now known as the Art for Schools Association (29 Queen Square, London, W.C.), of which Mr Ruskin is still president; and since its foundation over forty thousand standard pictures have been sold through its agency. The catalogue embraces a list of four hundred photographs, engravings, etchings, and chromo-lithographs, from the works of old masters and living artists, as well as studies from nature of birds and beasts and flowers. These are supplied at a reduced rate to elementary and secondary schools.

The country child also requires attention, according to Miss Cobbe. She relates an incident which took place on her return after a lengthened absence to her country home, when she addressed a youth formerly under her tuition.

'Well, Andrew,' said Miss Cobbe, 'how much do you remember of all my lessons?'

'Ah, ma'am, never a word.'

'Oh Andrew, Andrew! and have you forgotten all about the sun, the moon, and stars, the day and night, and the seasons?'

Andrew scratched his head and replied, 'Oh no, ma'am,' he said. 'I do remember now. And you set them on the schoolroom table, and Mars was a red gooseberry, and I ate him.'

Ruskin reminds us that we have hitherto been contented to do our educational work surrounded by cheap furniture and bare walls, and supposed that boys learned best when they sat on hard forms and had nothing but blank plaster above and about them whereon to engage their spare attention. In his own forcible way, he says that 'the best study of all is the most beautiful, and that a quiet glade of a forest or the nook of a lake-shore is worth all the schoolrooms in Christendom when once you are past the multiplication table; but, be that as it may, there is no question at all but that a time ought to come in the life of a well-trained youth when he can sit at a writing-table without wanting to throw the ink-stand at his neighbour, and when, also, he will feel more capable of certain efforts of mind with beautiful and refined forms about him than with ugly ones. When that time comes he ought to be advanced into the decorated schools, and this advance ought to be one important and honourable epoch of his life.'

Ruskin is here doubtless writing from experience, as some of the most powerful educating influences of his life came from travelling at home and abroad, afterwards sketching and writing, the foundation being laid by the early driving excursions with his father in England and Scotland.

It is worthy of notice that the latest Scotch Code embraces a scheme of 'nature knowledge' whereby junior scholars shall acquire, 'by means

of observation and inquiry, a knowledge of common objects, natural phenomena, and the surroundings of the school.'

Mr T. C. Horsfell in 1884 drew attention to what the Committee of the Manchester Art Museum was prepared to do in lending to schools pictures of beautiful scenery, interesting buildings, and historical scenes, with engravings of flowers, trees, and animals. It was intended to continue the series so as to include sculpture and beautiful common pottery. Later Mr W. G. Page, of Boston, U.S.A., recommended historical portraits and scenes from history for grammar-schools, and the best products of the art of Greece and Rome for high schools. He advocated classification of subjects, as Greek, Roman, and Egyptian rooms, and one to illustrate English history.

From a recent report of the United States Commissioner of Education, who gives prominence to this subject, we learn that an attempt was made to decorate a schoolroom in Boston in 1870 with ten casts of antique sculpture and eleven busts, at a cost of about £300. This attempt in a girls' school was made as 'a simple but efficient means of introducing an æsthetic element into the educational system of the United States.' Some years later schools in Chicago, Cambridge, Newhaven, Brooklyn, Milton, Salem, and Quincy had been adorned with photographs, engravings, and casts. In one instance the walls of the schoolroom were tinted in a quiet grayish tone, forming a background upon which were hung engravings, photographs and prints of some of the most famous pictures of the world, and also portraits of statesmen, heroes, and authors. In one room were pictures of Venice; in another views of Rome and of Florence. Brooklyn School Report said that beautiful pictures and impressive statues in schools were distinctly an educational factor. We hear of the extravagances of modern School Boards; but what will the ratepayer think of this sentiment?—'When it comes to be understood that the schoolroom is to be made as pleasant and well furnished as the model home, then the school is likely to take the place it should as a social factor.' The silent beauty, we are further told, irradiating from such decoration would quicken and purify the taste of the scholar without at all encroaching upon school-time. In a catalogue of works of art suitable for decorating schools which was prepared for an exhibition at Brooklyn there were four hundred and twelve entries, including photographs, engravings, statuary, pottery, and etchings.

A law was passed in the State of New York in 1893 in order to provide additional facilities for free instruction in natural history, geography, and kindred subjects by means of pictorial representations and lectures. This has been done by the kind of lantern known as the stereopticon. The instrument is easily manipulated, and writing or drawing upon ground glass, done with a common lead-pencil, shows well. Regular lantern slides

can also be used without limit. A practical teacher says in the *School Journal*: 'A city can buy a thousand views at the price of the same number of intermediate geographies. The slides will, however, be practically intact when the books are worn out. For educational service, then, the slides are not so expensive as books.' The gain is said to be great, from preferring to words and symbols the thing itself. The outlines of stream and hill, with physical productions, have a better chance of being remembered. In the same way, panoramic views of history may be presented, and pictures may also be made a useful handmaid in the teaching of physiology, astronomy, and geology. The magic-lantern has also been found useful in many English schools, especially to illustrate the geography lesson.

We need say very little here about literature in the form of reading-books for the schoolroom, so amply and ably catered for by many rival publishers. From the horn-book of a past generation we have travelled a long way. Our school-books may be somewhat less solid than those of the past, but never were they more attractively set forth or better illustrated. Good literature and good pictures elevate the taste and cultivate and enrich the understanding of the pupil. Such a work, although scarcely a schoolbook, as Gardiner's *Student's History of England*, with its hundreds of excellent illustrations, would have been impossible a generation ago. With such perfect and suitable instruments of education as our elementary and advanced 'Readers,' in proper hands, surely all the reasonable and unreasonable demands of that imperious dictator, the Education Code, may be abundantly satisfied.

S O W I N G.

Sow thou thy seed of corn and wait awhile.

See the snow falling and the ice-spray gleam
Above its hiding place. Hear the wind scream
And the wild tempest sweep o'er mile and mile
Of sullen landscape. Watch the rain-cloud's vial
Empty above it, and the fitful beam

Of sunlight thwart the field, until a seam
Of tender green shoot up to greet thy smile.
And lo! God's miracle is wrought once more
Of life from death—from loss, most wondrous gain:
The corn-field glitters with its golden store
On the same land where late the storm and rain
Beat on the bare, brown earth. Thy sowing o'er,
Thine but to wait and pray lest faith should wane!

Sow thou thy seed of love, O heart, and wait.

Though it lie hidden—though thy doubts and fears
Whisper to thee 'tis lost, and thy sad tears
Fall on the ice-bound soil of bitter fate—
Surely the seed will live: Spring sets the gate
Of life wide open. See! though hid for years,
Love seeks the light of love—its tender spears
Shall gladden thy sad eyes at last, though late:
E'en but the blade perchance and not the bloom.

Ofttimes God seeth that Love's flower rare
Hath no perfection this side of the tomb,
But needeth for its growth the purer air
Of His sweet Paradise: after earth's gloom
Love hath its blossoming—not here, but There!

KATE MELLERSH.